

After school physical activity programs

Description and Benefits

An after school physical activity program is a structured program delivered to children enrolled in primary school and provided after school hours usually during the timeslot of 3.00 pm to 5.30 pm. They are generally located at the primary school.

The program is designed to engage traditionally non-active children in structured physical activities and build pathways between local community organisations and sporting clubs.

The program provides increased opportunities for children to be physically active, improve motor skill development and provide opportunities for participation in quality, safe and supervised activities during latchkey hours. For further information regarding the benefits of developing fundamental movement skills see the intervention titled 'Fundamental movement and motor skill development programs' also provided on this website.

The Australian Government currently funds an initiative *Active After-school Communities Program*

Perceived benefits of after school programs include:

- anecdotal evidence of children joining organised sporting clubs after first trying it at the Active After School program
- activities are inclusive and fun,
- improved confidence, and attitude towards discipline to physical activity
- improved motor skills, social skills, team work, and nutrition
- Equipment purchased is available for school use as well (VicHealth, 2006)
- Physical activity was recreational and non-competitive.

The program is standardized through structured training of the sports instructors and a written plan of the activities undertaken in each session.

Size and distribution of the problem

General data about physical activity (including available data for Gippsland) can be found at <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Physical-activity--Size-and-distribution-of-problem>

Leadership

- The Active After School Program funds a coordinator.
- School or recreation provider in unfunded model.

Suggested Partners, their roles and responsibilities

- Primary schools to provide indoor and outdoor facilities for the program. Feeder primary schools to promote programs located in other schools.
- Service clubs (provision of activity leaders/transport), high school leadership programs (provision of activity leaders)
- Links with universities and TAFEs for provision of trained activity leaders.
- Partnerships between primary/secondary school, regional sporting assembly/clubs and AASC (Colmar Brunton Social Research, July 2008)

Australian Sports Commission, Active After-school Communities, Gippsland Sites 2013, Term 1 & 2

LGA	School
Bass Coast	Cowes Primary School
Baw Baw	Bass Valley Primary School Buln Buln Primary School Bunyip Primary School Chairo Primary School Darnum Primary School Drouin Primary School Drouin South Primary School Drouin West Primary School Garfield Primary School Longwarry Primary School Neerim South Primary School Nilma Primary School Newhaven Primary School Powlett River Primary School St Ita's Drouin St Josephs Warragul Primary School St Vincent's Primary School St.Joseph's Trafalgar St.Joseph's Primary School Wonthaggi Warragul North Primary School Warragul Primary School Wonthaggi North Primary School Wonthaggi Primary School
East Gippsland	Bairnsdale ARC Bairnsdale Primary School Bairnsdale West Primary School Bruthen Primary School Cann River Primary School Clifton Creek Primary School Eagle Point Primary School East Gippsland Secondary School Lakes Entrance Primary School Lindenow Primary School Lindenow South Primary School Lucknow Primary School Marlo Primary School Meerlieu Primary School Meetung Primary School Nicholson Primary School Omeo Primary School Orbost North Primary School Orbost Primary School Paynesville Primary School Swan Reach Primary School Swifts Creek Primary School Tambo Upper Primary School
Latrobe	Churchill Primary School Glengarry Primary School Gormandale Primary School Liddiard Road Primary School Traralgon Lumen Christi Primary School Moe Albert St Moe Elizabeth St Moe South St St Gabrielles Primary School Tobruk Street Primary School Toongabbie Primary School Traralgon South Primary School

	Tyers Primary School Willow Grove Primary School Yallourn North Primary School
South Gippsland	Inverloch Primary School Kongwak Primary School Korumburra Primary School Loch Primary School Mirboo North Primary School Nyora Primary School Poowong Primary School South Coast Christian College St Josephs Korumburra St. Laurence's Leongatha Tarwin Lower Primary School Tarwin Valley Primary School
Wellington	Araluen Primary School Briagolong Primary School Bundalaguah Primary School Cobains Primary School Cowwarr Primary School Devon North Primary School Guthridge Primary School Heyfield Primary School Longford Primary School Maffra Primary School Meerlieu Primary School Nambrok Denison Primary School Rosedale Primary School Sale Specialist School Seaspray Primary School St Mary's Primary School St.Mary's Primary School Yarram Stratford Primary School Wurruk Primary School

Resources for Implementation

Active After-school Communities Program (Federal Government)

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/aasc>

Evaluation of AASC program - Community Case Study

https://secure.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/261472/AASC_Vasse.pdf

The [Achievement Program](#) is a Healthy Together Victoria Initiative which replaces the 'Go for your life' program. This initiative will recognise achievements in promoting health and wellbeing and support the development of safe, healthy and friendly environments for learning, working and living in:

- schools and early childhood education and care services
- workplaces and workforces, and
- local communities.

Participating organisations will receive guidelines, resources and support to help meet [statewide benchmarks](#) for health promotion. They will be linked with local health professionals, organisations and programs to access additional support.

The benchmarks within the Achievement Program that are aligned with this intervention are contained within the "Physical activity" health priority area.

For Primary schools the relevant benchmark is 3.

The physical activity benchmarks can be downloaded from the following link

[Primary schools](#)

Janice Sangster, Philippa Eccleston and Stuart Porter. Improving children's physical activity in out-of-school hours care settings. Health Promotion Journal of Australia 2008; 19:16-21 (Sangster et al., 2008).

VicHealth (2006) School's Out, Get Active: Learnings from the Out of School hours sports program Victorian Health Promotion Foundation in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission.

<http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/~media/ProgramsandProjects/PhysicalActivity/SuccessStoriesAttachments/Schools%20Out%20Get%20Activeweb%20friendly%20final.ashx>

Eat Smart, Play Smart - Out of School Hours Care Manual (Heart Foundation) (available for purchase \$25)

<http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/healthy-kids/Pages/eat-smart-play-smart.aspx>

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (2004) Healthy and Active School Communities, A resource Kit for Schools.

[http://www.healthactive.gov.au/internet/healthactive/publishing.nsf/Content/schoolcommu_resourcekit.pdf/\\$File/schoolcommu_resourcekit.pdf](http://www.healthactive.gov.au/internet/healthactive/publishing.nsf/Content/schoolcommu_resourcekit.pdf/$File/schoolcommu_resourcekit.pdf)

V Martínez Vizcaíno, et al. Assessment of an after-school physical activity program to prevent obesity among 9- to 10-year-old children: a cluster randomized trial. International Journal of Obesity (2008) 32, 12–22.

<http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v32/n1/pdf/0803738a.pdf> **Sufficient evidence of effectiveness RCT conducted in rural schools only.

Clarks' Corner, H. & Knollwood, C. (2004) New Communities After School Project Annual Evaluation Report 2003-2004. University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies.

<http://dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/bitstream/19716/229/1/New%20Communities%20Final.pdf>

Predominantly a homework support program with incidental physical activity built in.

Evaluation Tools

Methods for measurement of impacts such as levels of physical activity and the methods for conducting assessment of fine motor skills are described at <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Physical-Activity-Evaluation-Tools>

Impact Evaluation Method

This evaluation design is focussed on trying to determine

- What is different as a result of delivering this intervention?
- What is the size of the effect compared to a non-intervention (control group)?

Given that the Active After School Program is an existing Federal Government initiative and resources are available to support the initiative, PCPs may consider that it is not necessary to understand the effectiveness of the intervention in terms of changes to physical activity levels (unless part of a broader package of interventions being delivered in that school) or development of fine motor skills. The objective for the PCP might simply be to increase participation in the initiative – and indicators for measuring participation have also been provided.

The preferred study design is quasi experimental with pre intervention, and post intervention measurement among both an intervention group and a control group. A weaker study design is pre intervention, and post intervention measurement among an intervention group only.

Measurement

Participation indicators

Proportion of children participating in the program: Numerator=Number of children participating, Denominator=Total student population of the school.

Proportion of schools in the catchment offering the program: Numerator=Number of schools offering the program, Denominator=Total number of schools in the catchment.

Proportion of total student population participating in the program: Numerator=Number of students participating in the program within the catchment, Denominator = Total student population in the catchment.

Building pathways to sporting clubs

Change in Rate of Participation in organised sport: Change in rate of participation in organised sport is measured at commencement in Active After School Program and then again at some fixed period (12 months) after.

References

- Booth, M., Okley, A., Denney-Wilson, E. & et al. (2006) NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (SPANS) 2004: Summary Report NSW Department of Health
http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2006/pdf/spans_report.pdf
- Colmar Brunton Social Research (July 2008) Evaluation of AASC program Community Case Study - Vasse community: summary of key findings Research and Planning Section Australian Sports Commission, 23 September 2008. http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/schools_and_juniors/aasc/about
- Sangster, J., Eccleston, P. & Porter, S. (2008) Improving children's physical activity in out-of-school hours care settings. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 19, 16 - 21.
http://www.healthpromotion.org.au/members/journals/apr08/HPJA_2008_1_%20Sangster.pdf
- Sanigorski, A. M., Bell, A. C., Kremer, P. J., Cuttler, R. & Swinburn, B. A. (2008) Reducing unhealthy weight gain in children through community capacity-building: results of a quasiexperimental intervention program, Be Active Eat Well. *International Journal of Obesity*, 32, 1060-1067.
http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/pracpages/Be_Active_Eat_Well
- VicHealth (2006) School's Out, Get Active: Learnings from the Out of School hours sports program Victorian Health Promotion Foundation in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission.
http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/assets/contentFiles/School's%20Out%20Get%20Active_web%20friendly%20final.pdf